



ANDREA HORWATH
LEADER OF ONTARIO'S NDP CHEF DU NDP DE L'ONTARIO

February 23, 2018

Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Premier
Room 281, Main Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1

Hon. Eric Hoskins, Minister
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4

Dear Premier Wynne and Minister Hoskins:

I am writing today to request that you take action to properly investigate serious allegations that have been brought to your attention in recent months.

I believe that every Ontarian should be able to work in an environment free of harassment, abuse, and bullying. Every Ontarian should also be able to trust that the regulation of our health professions is undertaken in a manner that protects patient safety and has the confidence of the profession.

On January 29, 2018, I and all Members of Provincial Parliament received correspondence documenting very serious allegations against the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, and indicating that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has not responded to multiple pieces of previous correspondence that documents these concerns and allegations.

It is my understanding that on September 21, 2017, Minister Hoskins' office received a letter addressed to the Council members of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario. This letter contains serious allegations with respect to bullying, harassment, and improprieties.

On October 30, 2017, sixteen present and former employees of the College wrote to Minister Hoskins anonymously, due to fear of reprisal, to express their concerns about "serious systemic problems within the College" and requesting action by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. This letter, on which I was copied, states that employees of the College have experienced intimidation, "a culture of hostility," and bullying and harassment. The whistleblowers write that the problems have "serious repercussions for the RCDSO's ability to protect the public," including preventing staff "from responding to patient complaints in a timely manner," and state that the "RCDSO has failed patients."

Yet, after that letter, it appears that you and your ministry did not follow up.

Queen's Park

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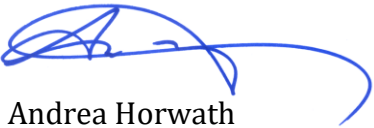
On December 4, 2017, a former elected Council member wrote to Minister Hoskins. This letter also contains very serious allegations concerning the mistreatment of staff, sexual harassment, and failures to protect the public, including the exposure of patients to unnecessary risk, amongst other serious alleged improprieties.

And on December 16, 2017, a former employee wrote to Minister Hoskins to make further detailed allegations of bullying, abuse, harassment, and improprieties, and expressing “dismay[...] that there has been no reaction to the letters you have received over the past couple of months.”

I am writing today to request that you take immediate action to investigate these serious allegations. Furthermore, since the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care became aware of these very serious allegations on or before September 21, 2017, I request an update as to what steps, if any, have been taken by the Ministry to investigate these concerns and allegations.

I trust you will agree with me that these allegations cannot be ignored by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. I look forward to receiving your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Andrea Horwath
Leader, Ontario's New Democrats
cc. Soha Khan
France G  linas, MPP